

Claim Amendments

1. (currently amended) A convertible inflatable furnishing which comprises an inflatable base including a base upper skin which forms a layer of the upper side of the base, a base lower skin which forms a layer of the lower side of the base, and a rim side which links the edge of the upper side of the base to the edge of the lower side of the base, an inflatable backrest, a fixing means to fix the backrest to the base upper skin, and an air passage between the base and the backrest allowing a flow of air between the inside of the base and the inside of the backrest when loads on the base and backrest change; said fixing means consists of a flexible closed-loop strip forming ~~a single entirely open hole with an~~ an open hole, an upper edge of the flexible closed-loop strip permanently connected to a lower end of the backrest and a lower edge of the flexible closed-loop strip permanently connected to the base upper skin; said fixing means is sufficiently flexible to allow the backrest to recline increasingly with deflation of the backrest including when the backrest is under an increasing load, and allow the backrest to erect increasingly with inflation of the backrest including when the load on the backrest is reducing.

2. (previously presented) The convertible inflatable furnishing of claim 1 wherein a connecting means is provided completely inside the base to connect a region of the base upper skin to a region of the base lower skin with the connecting means being in tension when the base is substantially inflated and the connecting means having such a length as to constrain horizontal mobility of the base upper skin relative to the base lower skin; wherein the connecting means includes an elastic material to absorb pressure shocks by reducing the maximum tension resulting from sudden loads applied to the furnishing.

3. (previously presented) The convertible inflatable furnishing of claim 2 wherein the connecting means includes an elastic material biasing the region of the base upper skin towards the region of the base lower skin, wherein the connecting means is connected to the base upper skin at a location where the front side of the backrest is joined to the base upper skin allowing tension in the elastic material to transmit through the base upper skin to the front side of the backrest, the elastic material in tension having a elastic modulus capable of supporting an increased load on the backrest wherein the supporting force tending to maintain erection of the backrest is increased when the base volumetrically expands due to increased pressurization of the base resulting from increased compression of the backrest.

4. (previously presented) The convertible inflatable furnishing of claim 2 wherein the bladder is fully enclosed by a cover, the base lower skin and the base upper skin are parts of the cover, and the bladder is of any size and shape that when inflated fills the cover and applies tension substantially throughout the cover so that the shape of the cover substantially determines the shape of the furnishing.

5. (previously presented) The convertible inflatable furnishing of claim 4 wherein the inflated bladder is tubular with sealed ends and the axis of the tubular bladder is curved in a substantially planar path surrounding the connecting means and the bladder is sufficiently long that a region of the bladder in the vicinity of one sealed end of the bladder abuts a region of the bladder in the vicinity of the other sealed end of the bladder.

End of Claim Amendments